

February 9, 2010

Good Morning Senator Handley, Representative Willis, and all members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee.

I am Joanne Ottman, RN, MSN, Academic Division Director for Allied Health and Nursing at Naugatuck Valley Community College. Thank you for allowing me to speak to you today in support of House Bill 5024, AN ACT CONCERNING AN EDUCATION DOCTORAL DEGREE PROGRAM IN NURSING EDUCATION.

The Connecticut Community College Nursing Program at Naugatuck Valley Community College is pleased to support the Connecticut State University System initiative to address the shortage of nursing faculty. The proposed collaborative doctoral program which leads to a Doctorate in Nursing Education will increase the number of nurse faculty available throughout the state. A shortage of academically prepared nurse educators is one of the critical factors limiting capacity in schools of nursing. In order to educate a sufficient number of registered nurses to meet the nursing shortage, schools of nursing must have individuals prepared for faculty roles as well as clinical experts. The doctorate in nursing education will provide the opportunity for clinical experts to develop the skills necessary to meet the complex educational needs of the adult learners in our nursing programs.

In addition, the collaborative doctoral program between Southern Connecticut State University and Western Connecticut State University will provide master's prepared faculty at the community colleges an opportunity to further their education and meet their career goals within the region. I strongly support this initiative.